S.No.	States	Number of persons involved in handloom industry
23.	Punjab	13160
24.	Rajasthan	71915
25.	Sikkim	1228
26.	Tamil Nadu	607675
27.	Tripura	291761
28.	Uttar Pradesh	401362
29.	Uttranchal	19322
30.	West Bengal	686254
	TOTAL:	6551354

NOTE: Source: Handloom Census 1995-96.

Curtailing the Textiles Quota of Indian Exporters by the U.S.

1808. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the U.S. is contemplating to curtail textiles quota of Indian exporters; and

(b) if so, what action Government propose to take to restore the quota of the Indian exporters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) No, Sir. (b) Does not arise, in view of (a) above.

Competitors in Textile Exports

1809. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and China are the main competitors in textile exports;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to help Indian Textile exporters and make them competitive with their neighbours; and

(c) the steps taken and the measures proposed to be taken by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and China, amongst other countries, are our competitors in International textile market.

(b) and (c) Government have been taking steps from time to time to increase the cost competitiveness of our textiles and clothing products in the International market. Some of the important initiatives are:—

(i) The Government has de-reserved the woven segment of readymade garment from the SSI sector.

(ii) A provision of Rs. 10 crores has been earmarked in the B.E. 2001-02 for creating cluster of excellence, *i.e.* appareal perks for production and export of garments. Besides, a provision of Rs. 15 crores has also been made in B.E. 2001 -02 for scheme for improvement of infrastructure facilities at major textile production centres.

(iii) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of this sector so that it can become more competitive in international trade. Inter Ministerial Committee to resolve the issues pertaining to assistance under TUFS has been constituted.

(iv) Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%.

(v) Technology Mission for Cotton has been launched for initiating focussed steps for boosting production, productivity and quality of cotton for manufacture and export of competitive downstream textile products.

(vi) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses / programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile

industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(vii) The import of a large number of garment machinery has been allowed under concessional custom duty of 5%.

(viii) With a view to encouraging backward integration, the custom duty on shuttleless looms has been brought to 5%.

(ix) Allowing foreign equity participation upto 100% through automatic route, in the textile sector with certain exceptions.

(x) To prepare and sensitise our textile and garment industry to.conform to the ecological requirements of improving countries by providing facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories.

(xi) The National Textile Policy-2000 (NTxP-2000) has been announced to provide the policy direction for orderly and sustained development and growth of the textile industry in a harmonious way and to give a thrust to textile exports.

(xii) DEPB rates for certain textile products have been rationalised.

(xiii) A programme has been announced to induct 50,000 shuttleless looms and to modernise 2.5 lakh powerlooms in the decentralised sector by 2004

(xiv) The following relaxations under the Quota Policy have been recently announced.

- Large additional quantities have been opened for most of the categories under the FCFS / RGE systems of the Quota Policies with a view to providing quotas to the garment and textile exporters on a continuous basis.
- In order to reduce transaction costs and time of the exporters, EMD/ BG amounts have reduced for certain categories and the date for utilising quotas have been extended. Further, the L / C condition under the FCFS system has also been waived for all such categories which have quantities left over for the rest of the year.